

How to Use The Intelligent Mail® Barcode

The Intelligent Mail barcode, formerly known as the 4-State Customer barcode, is a new 65-bar USPS barcode used to sort and track letters and flats. This new barcode expands mailers' ability to track individual mailpieces and provides greater visibility into the mailstream.

The use of this new barcode is optional at this time; however, many mailers are finding that it makes good business sense to begin using it now. Beginning in 2009, the Intelligent Mail barcode will be required to qualify for automation discounts.

1 Choose Which Services (If Any) You Want to Use

You have the option of using the Intelligent Mail barcode for OneCode Confirm™ and OneCode ACS™ as well as to qualify for automation discounts.

- **OneCode ACS** provides mailers with automated address corrections when a mailpiece cannot be delivered. OneCode ACS lets mailers use just one barcode instead of a combination of text endorsement, participant code, mailer keyline, and POSTNET barcode. This service is currently only available for use with First-Class Mail® and Periodicals.
- **OneCode Confirm** provides information on when the USPS receives your mail and when it is sorted on our mail processing equipment. A featured option of the Confirm® service, OneCode Confirm lets mailers use just one barcode instead of PLANET Code and POSTNET barcodes and increases the number of uniquely identified mailpieces. There are two types of Confirm service:
 1. Destination Confirm service (for outgoing mail) gives you advance information about when your mailpieces will reach their destinations.
 2. Origin Confirm service (for incoming mail) lets you anticipate when customers' remittance (checks, responses, or orders) are on the way back to you.

OneCode Confirm is available for use with First-Class Mail®, Standard Mail®, and Periodicals.

- **Automation discounts** are offered to mailers who barcode their letters and meet addressing, readability, and other requirements. The Intelligent Mail barcode must contain a proper routing ZIP Code and Business Entity ID in order to receive the automation discount.

2 Get a Business Entity ID

To use the Intelligent Mail barcode, you will need a Business Entity ID (BEI). Depending on the service(s) you choose, you should contact the appropriate program office.

OneCode ACS: Download an application from <http://ribbs.usps.gov/OneCodeSolution/> and mail or fax it in, or contact the ACS department at the National Customer Support Center at 800-331-5746.

OneCode Confirm: Confirm subscribers approved for OneCode Confirm must incorporate their Confirm Subscriber ID (their BEI) when using Intelligent Mail barcodes. OneCode Confirm subscribers can contact Confirm Customer Assistance at 800-238-3150, visit <https://mailtracking.usps.com>, or refer to Publication 197 for details.

Automation discounts: If you are printing the Intelligent Mail barcode solely for an automation discount, contact the *PostalOne!*® Help Desk at 800-522-9085.

3 Make Your Barcodes Unique

The last nine digits of the Intelligent Mail barcode's tracking information, the "Sequence Number," are reserved for mailers to uniquely identifying each mailpiece. Each service may have slightly different requirements for this field, but generally, you will use the Sequence Number to identify the mailing event and customer. Please refer to application-specific information for more details.

4 Produce the Barcode

Step 1: Put All the Information Together. Once you have selected your service(s), received your BEI, and created your unique Sequence Numbers, you are ready to put them all together to form the digits of the Intelligent Mail barcode. The Intelligent Mail barcode includes up to 31 digits made up of 20 tracking digits and up to 11 ZIP Code digits.

Read the Resource Guide on the USPS Rapid Information Bulletin Board System (RIBBS) website at <http://ribbs.usps.gov/OneCodeSolution/> for details about the information required.

Step 2: Download an Encoder. An encoder will take your tracking and ZIP Code information and convert it into the new 65-bar Intelligent Mail barcode. To download an encoder, visit <http://ribbs.usps.gov/OneCodeSolution/>, and download the encoder that is made for your particular operating environment (e.g., Windows, Linux, MVS).

Step 3: Download a Font. Next, you will need to download a font that converts the 65-character string into the barcode itself. Download a font from <http://ribbs.usps.gov/OneCodeSolution/> that works with your printing environment (e.g., TrueType, PostScript, AFP).

5 Print the Intelligent Mail Barcode on Your Envelopes

Finally, you will place the barcode on your letters. The placement differs depending on the services you chose:

- **For OneCode ACS** the barcode must be applied at the top of the address block. This is to keep the barcode from being covered by a forwarding label. The Intelligent Mail barcode must contain an 11-digit delivery point ZIP Code.
- **For OneCode Confirm** or automation discounts the barcode can be applied either above or below the address block, or in the barcode clear zone.

OneCode ACS and OneCode Confirm require that you submit mailpiece samples to the National Customer Support Center for review prior to activating your account. See the publications and applications for both services for details about this review.

To learn more about the Intelligent Mail barcode, including the full specification, visit the RIBBS Web site at <http://ribbs.usps.gov/OneCodeSolution/>.

